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# Terry Glavin: How some New Democrats would 'redefine Canada's place in the world.' It's scary

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## Body

To read through the 45 resolutions that the New Democratic Party's Convention 2021 policy book has placed under its "Redefining Canada's Place in the World" chapter heading is to be left with the impression, if you're a reasonably literate observer of the world, that these people have lost their damn minds.

On the bright side, the pathology on such depressing display in those resolutions doesn't necessarily afflict New Democrats generally, but rather only broad swathes of the NDP activist base. Most of the resolutions that would insult the intelligence of any genuine social democrat will likely be expunged in advance of the NDP's "Convention 2021 Virtually" proceedings, which run from Friday to Sunday this week.

Also, some of the resolutions are largely harmless, requiring NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh to rise to replicate the uselessly milquetoast policies that the Liberal government has already adopted or otherwise claims to embrace. And there are one or two decent ideas, even.

Who could object to the decently internationalist suggestion from the New Democrats of Prince Albert, Sask., that the NDP "show a willingness" to cut diplomatic ties with or impose sanctions upon regimes that persist in abusing human rights and refuse to change their foul ways? There's also a resolution or two that could be placed in a category of clumsily composed suggestions of the foggy but well-meaning sort, as with a Vancouver East NDP resolution that appears to propose that "permanent resident status be granted upon arrival in Canada" to "all migrant/undocumented workers."

Among the 45 resolutions there is even one that falls unmistakably within a recognizable legacy of left-wing activism. The United Steelworkers' Local 5926 would want an NDP government to only pursue trade agreements that contain binding provisions on labour rights and environmental standards, preserve government regulatory autonomy, protect Canadian manufacturing and cultural industries and so on. The NDP should further require greater accountability and transparency in trade talks, the steelworkers say.

But these resolutions stand out because they are anomalies. Much of the rest is given over to the wish lists of the NDP's trudging neo-Stalinist undead and that legion of "ant-Zionist" zombies that has managed to suck the life out of any genuine Euro-American solidarity with the cause of Palestinian freedom by its incessant mongering of grievances over the fact that the Jewish state of Israel is so impudent as to merely exist.

Adam Zivo: Unserious NDP faction wants to abolish the military and pull out of NATO( *https://nationalpost.com/opinion/adam-zivo-can-the-ndp-be-trusted-to-take-foreign-policy-seriously* )

Tasha Kheiriddin: Let the fun begin at duelling Liberal, NDP policy conventions( *https://nationalpost.com/opinion/tasha-kheiriddin-let-the-fun-begin-at-duelling-liberal-ndp-policy-conventions* )

In the fantasy world that emerges from the NDP's resolution book, Syria, for instance, doesn't even exist. The worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. Six million Syrian refugees. Half a million dead. Tens of thousands of Syrian leftists and democrats disappeared, tortured and murdered by the bloodthirsty Bashar Assad and his Russian and Iranian accomplices. The regime's deployment of chemical weapons against civilians serially documented by the United Nations. And none of this gets so much as a casual mention in the entire Convention 2021 resolution book.

Xi Jinping's state-capitalist horror show in Beijing barely gets noticed. To be fair, Russia is at least mentioned. Once. While in the real world, Vladimir Putin is still waging a semi-covert war on Ukraine after having invaded and occupied Crimea and Donbass in 2014, Russia shows up only as the object of sympathy in a proposed resolution from Spadina - Fort York and Hamilton Centre New Democrats who want Canada pulled out of NATO. NATO should withdraw its "nuclear ring around Russian borders," the resolution further demands (also the Canadian Armed Forces should be disbanded).

Despite these weird omissions, three dozen NDP electoral district associations, unions and party organizations found the time, in six separate resolutions, to single out the State of Israel.

One resolution would upgrade the Palestinian General Delegation in Canada to de facto embassy status, over Israel's objections. Another would update the NDP policy book to stipulate that New Democrats "believe in" certain things - that Israel should end its "violence targeting civilians," and Canada should prohibit any and all trade with Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and suspend any military trade with the Israeli state.

Without naming him, another resolution takes specific aim at the efforts exerted by former NDP leader Thomas Mulcair, who managed to quarantine the same anti-Semitic toxicity that wrecked the British Labour Party during the tenure of the disgraced Jeremy Corbyn. Those efforts "blocked or removed NDP candidates who simply mentioned Israeli state crimes against Palestinians," the nine riding associations behind that resolution complain.

So now, the resolution proposes, the NDP should embrace a policy of "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions" against the Israeli state itself until Israel dismantles the "apartheid wall" along its borders with Palestinian Authority areas and Hamas-held territory, and also until Israel allows "refugees to return home." In other words, until Israel commits suicide. The resolution fails to mention that the UN's absurd roster of Palestinian refugees counts at least five million descendants of the original Palestinian refugee population from the 1940s. Israel's current population of Jews, Arab Muslims, Christians, the Druze and others stands at about 9.5 million.

Another three resolutions are premised on an enduring mythology in "anti-Zionist" circles - that powerful forces will slander you as an anti-Semite if you innocently criticize Israeli policy. One resolution stipulates that the NDP should not "censor or punish" its members in this way if they merely bang on about Israel's "apartheid" practices and traffic in similar calumnies. Another two take specific aim at the widely accepted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism, which the resolutions' sponsors claim has been "weaponized" to silence legitimate critiques of Israel's human rights abuses, and therefore the NDP should specifically reject the IHRA definition and its examples of anti-Semitic criticisms of Israel.

This strange preoccupation with the world's only Jewish state, coupled with a singularly intense sensitivity to free speech in the poisonous rhetoric that has so badly mangled the discourse around Israel-Palestine on the left, is at least consistent with the other standout features of "Redefining Canada's Place in the World" as imagined within the NDP's activist base.

The NDP should "express its solidarity" with the regime in Cuba. Never mind that the latest Human Rights Watch report on the impoverished island notes that the government's devotion to free speech is exemplified by arbitrarily arresting and jailing hundreds of journalists and human rights defenders every year, and further subjecting regime critics to "beatings, public shaming, travel restrictions, and termination of employment."

And "hands off Venezuela," while you're at it, New Democrats, because what matters is the right of Nicolas Maduro's nightmare state to "self-determination." So never mind the 18,000 Venezuelans murdered by Maduro's security forces between 2016 and 2019, according to the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

And never mind the Bolivarian destruction of the economy, and the four million Venezuelans who have fled, in rags, to neighbouring countries.

Never mind any of this, New Democrats. You're being called to the work of "redefining Canada's place in the world," a world of ***climate justice*** and gender equity and progressive tax policies and electric cars and free dental care. Never mind everyone else in the world. You'll be just fine.

It's going to be just great.

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